

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

ACDA-19 NEA-10 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 AID-20 EB-11 CIEP-02

STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 IO-14 DRC-01 /174 W

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R 221210Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 256

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 1715

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XT, EEC, US

SUBJECT: BELGIAN MEDIA TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS
CONTINUED)

REF: BRUSSELS 1606 AND 1676

1. SUMMARY. BELGIAN MEDIA PRECEIVE IN PRESIDENT'S HOUSTON PRESS
CONFERENCE A SOFTENING OF TONE COMPARED WITH HIS EARLIER REMARKS
IN CHICAGO. PRESS AND RADIO COMMENTARY DWELLS ON MOTIVES OF US
LEADERS,
ISOLATIONISM, TROOP WITHDRAWALS AND FRG OFFSET. END SUMMARY.

2. IN DAILY PRESS, PRESIDENT NIXON'S HOUSTON REMARKS ARE COVERED
UNDER SUCH HEADINGS AS: "NIXON EXTENDING CONCILIATORY HAND TO
EUROPE" (SOCIALIST "VOLKSGAZET", IN FLUENTIAL CATHOLIC "DE
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STANDAARD",

AND MASS-CIRCULATION CONSERVATIVE "HET LAATSTE NIEUWS": "NIXON CONFIDENT ABOUT FUTURE OF U. S. - EUROPE RELATIONS" (IMPORTANT INDEPENDENT "LE SOIR"); "PRESIDENT NIXON NUANCES HIS REMARKS" (LABOR CATHOLIC "LA CITE"); "UNEXPECTED - NIXON CONGRATULATES JOBERT" (MASS CIRCULATION INDEPENDENT "LA MEUSE/LA LANTERNE"); "ALTHOUGH IN MORE SOFTENED TERMS NIXON RENEWS HIS BLACKMAIL -- HE ALREADY SAYS HE'S CONVINCED OF FORTHCOMING SURRENDER OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS" (COMMUNIST "LE DRAPEAU ROUGE").

3. INFLUENTIAL CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC "LA LIBRE BELGIQUE" WONDERES WHAT TO THINK OF SUCCESSION OF "COLD AND HOT SHOWERS" WHICH MESSRS. NIXON AND KISSIGNER ARE APPLYING TO EUROPE: "DO THE AMERICAN LEADERS, AWARE OF THEIR POWER AND THEIR LEADERSHIP, WANT TO PLAY CAT AND MOUSE WITH A EUROPE WHICH IS NOT AT THE TOP OF ITS FORM? ARE THEY TRYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PRESENT DIFFICULTIES OF COMMUNITY TO FURTHER WEAKEN IT BY INCREASING CONTRADICTIONS AND DIFFERENCES AMONG NINE, OR HAS PRESIDENT NIXON FOUND A DEVICE TO MAKE PEOPLE FORGET WATERGATE AFFAIR? ONE THING IS CERTAIN: IT IS NOT THE KIND OF REGIME THAT WILL HELP EUROPE AND U. S. TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS AND, ABOVE ALL, TO BEGIN A FRANK AND DIRECT DIALOGUE, WHICH APPEARS TO BE INCREASINGLY NECESSARY".

4. LABOR CATHOLIC "LA CITE" BRIEFLY REMARKS THAT "PRESIDENT HAS ATTEMPTED, WITHOUT FUNDAMENTALLY MODIFYING IN SUBSTANCE HIS CRITICAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS EUROPE, TO CORRECT DEPLORABLE IMPRESSION MADE BY BRUTAL STATEMENTS OF LAST FRIDAY IN CHICAGO". SAME PAPER CARRIES INSIDE-PAGE ARTICLE ("AFP" REPRINT): (PARIS WISHES MAINTENANCE OF U. S. TROOPS, BUT NOT AT COST OF (LOSS OF) INDEPENDENCE OF EUROPE". ARTICLE REVIEWS RECENT ARTICLE BY UDR SEC GEN SANGUINETTI, WHO WROTE THAT U. S. WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM EUROPE COULD REPRESENT SALUTARY SHOCK FOR EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION.

5. EDITORIAL IN WIDELY READ CATHOLIC "GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN" SAYS THAT, WHEREAS "NIXON'S LATEST REFERENCE TO INCREASING ISOLATIONISM COULD BE REGARDED AS KIND OF JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS THREAT THAT U. S. TROOPS MIGHT WELL BE WITHDRAWN FOR EUROPE", PEOPLE IN GERMANY MORE THAN ELSEWHERE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT U. S. MILITARY SUPPORT TO EUROPE: "MORE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE, PEOPLE THERE REALIZE THAT

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INCREASING ISOLATIONISM IN AMERICA IS NOT A FAIRY TALE, EXPLOITED TO OBTAIN ADVANTAGES. TO WANT TO DISMISS THIS TREND IS AS RECKLESS AS UNDERESTIMATING DANGER OF "FINLANDIZATION" OF EUROPE".

6. IN SOCIALIST "LE PEUPLE", ROBERT FALONY TRIES TO "DEMYSTIFY" U. S. "THREATS" OF WITHDRAWING U. S. TROOPS FROM EUROPE: "AMERICAN FORCES ARE NOT ON OLD CONTINENT OUT OF LOVE FOR EUROPEANS. THEY ARE THERE FOR GLOBAL NEEDS OF ATLANTIC DEFENSE, IN FRAMEWORK OF ALLIANCE

LED BY U. S., AND BECAUSE IT WAS RULED OUT AT TIME OF 'COLD WAR' FOR WASHINGTON TO LET STALIN'S EMPIRE APREAD FURTHER TO WEST. SINCE THAT TIME, RUSSIAN THREAT HAS LOST EVERY CREDIBILITY AS FAR AS AREA COVERED BY NATION IS CONCERNED. BUT TWO OPPOSING SYSTEMS DO NOT INTEND FOR THAT REASON TO WITHDRAW MILITARILY FROM EUROPE, AND THAT IS VERY CONTRARY TO 'INDEPENDENCE' OF EUROPE. IT CAN BE SAID THAT AMERICAN FORCES CANNOT LEAVE FRG WITHOUT CREATING VACUUM DETRIMENTAL TO INTERESTS OF AMERICAN-LED ATLANTIC BLOC. U. S. "BLACKMAIL' IN FIELD IS THUS NOT VERY CREDIBLE."

7. FLEMISH RADIO (BRT) COMMENTARY, AFTER REVIEWING HISTORY OF US-EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES, WENT AS FOLLOWS: "IN BONN, PEOPLE ARE WONDERING WHETHER NIXON'S TOUGH ADDRESS DIRECTED AT EUROPE WAS NOT ALSO DESIGNED TO MAKE GERMANS MORE FORTHCOMING ON THIS DIFFICULT PROBLEM (OF COST SHARING). FOR HIM, SETTLEMENT IS DOMESTIC SUCCESS, FOR NO PRESIDENT BEFORE HIM HAS EVER BEEN CAPABLE OF OBTAINING SO MUCH FROM GERMANS. BONN, FOR ONE, HAS MADE CLEAR THAT IT CONTINUES TO ATTACH GREAT VALUE TO STATIONING OF U. S. TROOPS IN COUNTRY." STRAUZ-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BRUSSE01715
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740061-0799
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740324/aaaaavqo.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BRUSSELS 1606 AND 1676
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2002 by kellerpr>; APPROVED <11 APR 2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIAN MEDIA TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS CONTINUED)
TAGS: PFOR, XT, US, XG, EEC, (NIXION, RICHARD M)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005